

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 and 22 are cancelled; claims 16, 26, 34 and 35 are amended; and claims 16-21 and 23-35 are pending in the application.

Applicant hereby affirms the election of the claims of group II (16-35) of the Examiner's restriction, and has cancelled claims 1-15 from the application.

The drawings stand objected to for containing a reference character "9" in Fig. 8 and a reference character "7" in Fig. 6 which the Examiner indicates are not adequately described in the specification. Applicant has amended paragraphs 25 and 27 of the specification to describe the reference numeral "7" of Fig. 6 and the reference numeral "9" of Fig. 8, respectively. Specifically, the specification is amended to indicate that the region labeled "7" in Fig. 6 is an expanded region of Fig. 6 shown in Fig. 7, and the region labeled "9" in Fig. 8 is an expanded region of Fig. 8 shown in Fig. 9. Applicant believes that the amendments to the specification relative to paragraphs 25 and 27 overcome the Examiner's objections to the drawings, and accordingly requests that the Examiner's objections to the drawings be withdrawn in the Examiner's next action.

Claims 26 and 34 stand objected to for the informality that the term "form" should be "from". Applicant thanks the examiner for the careful reading of the claims, and has amended claims 26 and 34 to replace the term "form" with the term "from", and accordingly requests that the objections to claims 26 and 34 be withdrawn in the Examiner's next action.

Claim 35 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112 for being indefinite, in that claim 35 refers to "the flange", which is not supported by the claim 33 from which claim 35 depends. The Examiner recommends changing the dependency of claim 35 to depend from 34 rather than claim 33. Applicant has amended claim 35, so that the claim now depends from claim 34, and accordingly requests that the §112 rejection of claim 35 be withdrawn in the Examiner's next action.

Claims 16-21 and 23-26 stand rejected over Buehler and/or Pouliquen; and claims 22 and 27-35 are indicated to contain allowable subject matter. Applicant has amended claim 16 to incorporate the subject matter of claim 22 therein, and believes that such places claim 16 in condition for allowance. Claims 17-21 and 23-25 depend from claim 16, and are therefore believed allowable for at least the reasons for which claim 16 is allowable. Claims 27-33 are indicated to be allowed, and claims 34 and 35 are indicated to contain allowable subject matter subject to the objection of claim 34 and §112 rejection of claim 35 being overcome. For the reasons discussed above, the objection of claim 34 and §112 rejection of claim 35 are believed to be overcome by the amendments presented herein. Applicant therefore believes that claims 27-35 are now in condition for allowance.

Claims 16-21 and 23-35 are allowable for the reasons discussed above, and Applicant therefore requests formal allowance of such claims in the Examiner's next action.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: 

David G. Latwesen, Ph.D.
Reg. No. 38,533